



Rafael Collazo

Hispanic Bus. Education & Outreach

Rafael Collazo was born in Caquas, Puerto Rico and came to Meriden, CT on July 7, 1952 and has been a resident ever since. Highly spirited and motivated Rafael has been able to accomplish a great deal of success in his endeavors on behalf of the Hispanic community throughout Connecticut.

He believes wholeheartedly that his mission is to help empower individuals through economic development, and he is passionate about fulfilling his goal. His favorite saying is, "You give a man a fish and you have fed him for a day. But you teach a man how to fish, and you have fed him for a lifetime." Living by this parable drives Rafael in his tireless efforts of reaching out to others.

When Rafael joined CSBDC five years ago the organization was struggling to create an

entrepreneurship training program that would meet the needs of Connecticut's Hispanic community. Rafael took this opportunity to help to successfully build a program that is now recognized as a national model for Hispanic Entrepreneurship Training. Currently, there is a waiting list of requests from municipal economic development officials and Hispanic organizations for the program to be offered in their area.

Rafael whose job only compensates him for twenty hours of service per week devotes normally 50 hours or more each week in his mission to help provide members of the minority community with the tools needed for economic independence. Rafael believes wholeheartedly in his responsibility to the Hispanic and Latino community, and he is committed to making it

happen. For his dedication and commitment to the betterment of his fellow countrymen Rafael has garnered the acclaim, admiration and respect from many Hispanic organizations in the city and state. For his unselfish devotion and perseverance in dealing with issues affecting his people, he has been the recipient of several awards of recognition.

Rafael also finds time to serve as a volunteer on numerous community organizations and boards, and was recently elected vice-chairperson of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Republican Hispanic Congress.

He has been married to his childhood sweetheart Theresa for fifty-one years. They have two sons and a grandson.

2004 Minority Small Business Advocate of the Year